



## Germany: Facts & Figures November 2006

*A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany*

### Politics

If Bundestag elections would have been held on December 3, the CDU/CSU would have received 32% of the vote, the SPD 28%, the Green Party 11%, the FDP 12%, the PDS (with WASG) 11%, and all other parties combined 6%. (Forsa. 11/29/06)

64% of Germans think that SPD leader Kurt Beck is the most credible German politician, followed by Chancellor Merkel and Interior Minister Schäuble with 62%, Lower Saxony Minister President Wulff (61%), and Foreign Minister Steinmeier with 60%. (Infratest. Die Welt, 11/17/06)

33% of leading managers from trade and industry consider Chancellor Merkel a "strong chancellor," down from 57% three months ago. (Allensbach. Die Welt, 11/07/06)

### Economy

The unemployment rate dropped to 9.6% in November as the number of people out of work fell below 4 million for the first time in more than four years. The jobless rate dropped by 89,000. At the same time, the number of gainfully employed increased by 350,000. (Major papers, 12/01/06)

The purchasing power of consumers has hardly changed over the past 15 years. Net income dropped by 2% after accounting for inflation. The average German household had a net income of 33,700 euros in 2005. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 11/28/06)

The Bundestag has adopted a budget for FY 2007 amounting to 270.5 billion euros, an increase of 3.5% compared to the figures from last year. The budget deficit for FY 2006 will be less than 30 billion due to the booming economy. For FY 2007, Finance Minister Steinbrück plans a deficit of 19.7 billion euros, the smallest deficit since German unification. (Major papers, 11/25/06)

German business confidence brightened again in November for the second month in a row and the Ifo (?-what is Ifo) business climate index rose to 106.8 from 105.3 in October. (Ifo index. Major papers, 11/24/06)

In its report on the further development of Germany's economy, the Five Wise Men expect an annual economic growth of 2.4% this year and 1.8% next year. The government expects an economic growth of 1.4% next year. (Major papers, 11/08/06)

Due to higher tax revenues, the German government will cut non-wage labor costs and reduce the budget deficit. With 19.6 billion euros in 2007, the country will reach the lowest net borrowing since reunification. Contributions to the unemployment insurance will be lowered from 6.5 to 4.2% on January 1, 2007. (Major papers, 11/06/07)

Of the 10.5 billion euros the new Länder received for reconstruction, 5.2 billion euros were not used for investments and subsidies for local governments as laid down in the law. (Major dailies, 11/06/06)

### Society

87% of Germans have a positive view of the Bundeswehr, up from 85% in 2005 and 83% in 2004. (Emnid. FAZ, 11/23/06)

49% of young Germans and 44% of the overall population do not approve of peacekeeping missions based on a UN mandate. 68% support German participation in Operation Enduring Freedom (an operation without a UN mandate), while only 52% approve of German participation in the ISAF mission for Afghanistan (an operation with a UN mandate). (Defense Ministry. Major papers, 11/22/06)

Germany's population will drop as much as 16% by 2050 because of low birth rates. Overall population will fall from the current 82.4 million to between 69 and 74 million. The number of births will fall from 685,000 to about 500,000 in 2050. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 11/08/06)

69% of Germans would like to see a reduction in German participation in international military missions. 57% (that sentence is a little awkward) generally approve that Germany participates in foreign missions. (Infratest Dimap. Major papers, 11/03/06)